(79th Amendment) Bill, in 1992 has been pending in the Rajya Sabha for the last 12 years for want of political consensus.

The issue of withdrawing the Bill is under consideration of the Government.

Food Adulteration

1962. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that food adulteration is being reported regularly in one or other parts of the country;

(b) whether the entry of MNCs in the food industry contributed to adulteration to gain competitive edge on price front; and

(c) the steps taken to identify/prevent adulteration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Cases of food adulteration have been detected in different parts of the country from time to time. The implementation of the PFA Act, 1954 and Rules framed thereunder are entrusted with the Food (Health) Authorities of the States/ UTs. The enforcement staff of the States/UTs. draw random samples of various food articles under the provisions of the said Act and Rules Action is taken against the offenders where the samples of food articles do not conform to the prescribed standards.

No such specific reports that entry of MNCs in food industry has contributed to food adulteration has come to the notice of Government. The Food (Health) Authorities of the States/UTs. are advised from time to time to keep a strict vigil on the quality of various food articles being sold in the markets and draw random samples from manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers etc. regularly.

Qualification for nursing course

1963. SHRI N.K. PREMA CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Nursing Council of India insists that the applicants for nursing course should be unmarried or legally divorced women;

(b) whether the height and weight are prescribed as an eligibility condition for admission;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to change the above eligibility criteria as it require modifications on par with developed community and made it viable with the existing social structure; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) According to the Indian Nursing Council, there are no stipulations regarding marital status, height or weight of the candidates for admission to a nursing course. The candidates should, however, be medically fit.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Injectable contraceptives for women

1964. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Government are thinking of introducing hormonal injectable contraceptives for women like Neten, Depo provera, etc.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how effective is the above contraceptives, when compared to other existing ones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) Both injectable contraception Net-en and Depo provera has been given marketing permission since 1986 and 1993 respectively on the prescription of a physician. However, the Government of India has not taken any decision to introduce the hormonal injectable contraceptives for women into the National Family Welfare Programme.

(c) The injectable contraceptives are comparable in effectiveness to combined oral pills, CuT 380 A, IUD and voluntary sterilization.